BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS Infoline

Issue: 97-34 6 Pages
August 22, 1997

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highlights

a weekly digest of recently released British Columbia statistics

The Economy

- **British Columbia, along with Manitoba and Quebec enjoyed a marginal 0.1% decline in the Consumer Price Index from June to July 1997.** Year-over-year, inflation in BC tied for lowest place with Prince Edward Island at 0.9%, an annual rate that has remained unchanged in the province since February.

  Higher prices in July over a year ago for fresh vegetables, bakery products, coffee and tea, piped gas and inter-city transportation were offset by declines in gas prices and the costs of owned accommodation.

  Of the metropolitan areas, Vancouver and Montreal had the largest monthly decrease at -0.3%. Victoria prices dropped by 0.1%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **June retail sales in British Columbia were $2.6 billion (seasonally-adjusted), down 5.4% from May, but up 1.3% over June 1996.** Across Canada, sales were down 0.2% in the month, but up 7.1% from June a year ago.

  BC January-to-June sales (unadjusted), were up 4.3% compared to the first 6 months of 1996. Sales were flat or declining in men's and women's clothing stores, shoe stores and motor vehicle dealers. Gas stations, auto parts, and home furnishings stores were the winners province-wide with double-digit increases. Sales in metro Vancouver declined 1.1%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

- **The value of BC exports fell 0.2% to $2,172 million between May and June, but was up 6.1% from June 1996.** At the same time, imports clearing customs in BC rose 0.2% in June over May to $1,848 million and 18.2% from the previous June.

  On a year-to-date basis, BC exports were up 9.9%. All major export sectors, with the exception of energy, showed significantly higher increases than the country as a whole. Forest products, by far the most significant component of BC exports, were up 9.5%. Machinery and equipment and consumer products both increased more than twenty percent. Agricultural and food products, which declined 1.5% nationally, rose 6.9% in BC. Industrial goods and automotive products increased 14.4% and 10.6%, respectively. Energy exports declined 6.8%. *Source: Statistics Canada*

Agriculture

- **Recently released information from the 1996 Census shows little change in the number of BC farms since 1921.** In that year, there were 21,973 farms compared with 21,835 in 1996. However, today's farms are much larger, totalling 6.3 million acres compared with 2.8 million acres in 1921. Changes in crops and land use are substantial. While acreage devoted to potatoes, tree fruits and horses has dropped since 1921, there have been major increases in land area used for raising barley, corn, vegetables, cattle, pigs and chickens. *Source: SC, Cat. 93-358*

Culture

- **British Columbians' use of public libraries continued to increase in 1996 despite declining library staff and hours of service.** On a per capita basis, 11.6 items were borrowed from libraries in 1996 compared with 11.3 in 1995 and 10.4 a decade earlier. The number of professional librarians working in the system declined almost 6% between 1995 and 1996. The share of expenditures on materials re-

Report **Hot off the press!**

Did you know...?
British Columbians paid public libraries $3.6 million in overdue fines in 1996.

mained unchanged (14%), but the cost of facilities took up a larger share of budgets (11% in 1996 up from 9% in 1995). Hours of service per week declined 14%.

Over 10 million books were available to readers on public library shelves. Patrons also had the choice of 164,000 audio cassettes, 54,000 audio CD's, 161,000 videos and 26,000 audiobooks. *Source: Library Services Div., Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing*

- **Dance is the most highly government subsidized performing arts discipline in Canada.** Government grants accounted for 39% of revenue in 1994-95. Public funding of dance companies has averaged increases of only 1% a year over the past five years despite an overall increase in expenditures of 14%. Music relies on public sources for 37% of its revenue. While government funding of music companies doubled over the last 5 years, earned revenue increased only 2%. Theatre had the highest share of earned revenue (53%), but still relied on public funding for a third of its money. Opera, with the highest share of revenue from private sponsorships (24%), was the only discipline to report a decrease in this funding source in the five years since 1990-91. Government funding for opera remained unchanged at 30%, over the period of the study. *Source: SC, Cat. 87-004, Vol. 9 No. 2*

- **Almost 50% of persons in the cultural labour force cited on the job training as having the greatest impact on their job skills, according to a 1994 survey**. Another 13% cited volunteer and amateur work as effective modes of training. This is despite the fact that 45% of people working in the arts have a university degree, compared with 17% of the total labour force. With the exception of people working in institutions, a large proportion of the cultural labour force was dissatisfied with their training. For those desiring training, the most common deterrents were lack of time and lack of money. Nearly two-thirds of respondents to the survey also noted that technology has had an impact on their work. Many reported that they had had no training to respond technology changes. The exceptions were people working in public libraries and museums. *Source: SC, Cat. 87-004, Vol. 9 No. 2*

Health

- **The number of medical personnel in BC has not increased at the same pace as the population.** The number of active physicians per 10,000 population dropped from 22.35 in 1995 to 21.78 in 1996. Decreases also occurred for pharmacists, nurses and psychologists. Medical fields which showed increased ratios were dentists and dental hygienists, dietitians and nutritionists, and occupational therapists.

Source: Rollcall Update 96, UBC

Research & Development

- **Canada's spending on research and development as a percentage of Gross Domestic Product has increased from 1.48% in 1986 to 1.64% in 1996.** In a 1995 international comparison, this ratio was just over half that of Sweden and Japan, the leaders in R&D expenditure relative to GDP. The US, placing third at 2.58%, was also far ahead of Canada.

British Columbia spent 0.9% ($924 million) of its GDP in 1995. Only New Brunswick and PEI spent less than BC. The leading provinces were Quebec (1.9%), Ontario (1.8)%, Nova Scotia (1.2%) and Alberta (1.0%).

Where does the money come from? The federal government contributed $3.0 billion of the total $12.7 billion spent on R&D in Canada in 1995. Twenty-six percent of federal funding went into the National Capital Region. BC received 8%. Business funded 47% of R&D expenditures in BC, compared with 57% in Quebec, 52% in Ontario, and 45% in Alberta. The provincial government contributed 5% of the total in this province with the balance coming from educational institutions, nonprofit agencies and foreign sources. The Quebec, Ontario and Alberta provincial governments contributed 7%, 4% and 10%, respectively.

Who does the R&D? Business performs fully 60% of the R&D activity in BC. In Ontario business is responsible for 74% and in Quebec, 65%. Higher educational institutions receive 27% of R&D money in BC compared with 20% in Ontario. The highest share done by the education sector is in Newfoundland (54%) where business has the lowest involvement (11%).

Source: SC, Cat. 88-001, Vol. 21, No. 9

For data originating from Statistics Canada: data sourced to 'Statistics Canada' has been retrieved from CANSIM, the agency's electronic database; otherwise the source is identified as 'SC' plus the publication name or catalogue number.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

BC STATS
Ministry of Finance and
Corporate Relations

Contact: Margaret Johnson
Toll-free: (888) 322-3284
Tel: (250) 387-0375
Release: August 1997

1997 British Columbia Manufacturers' Directory

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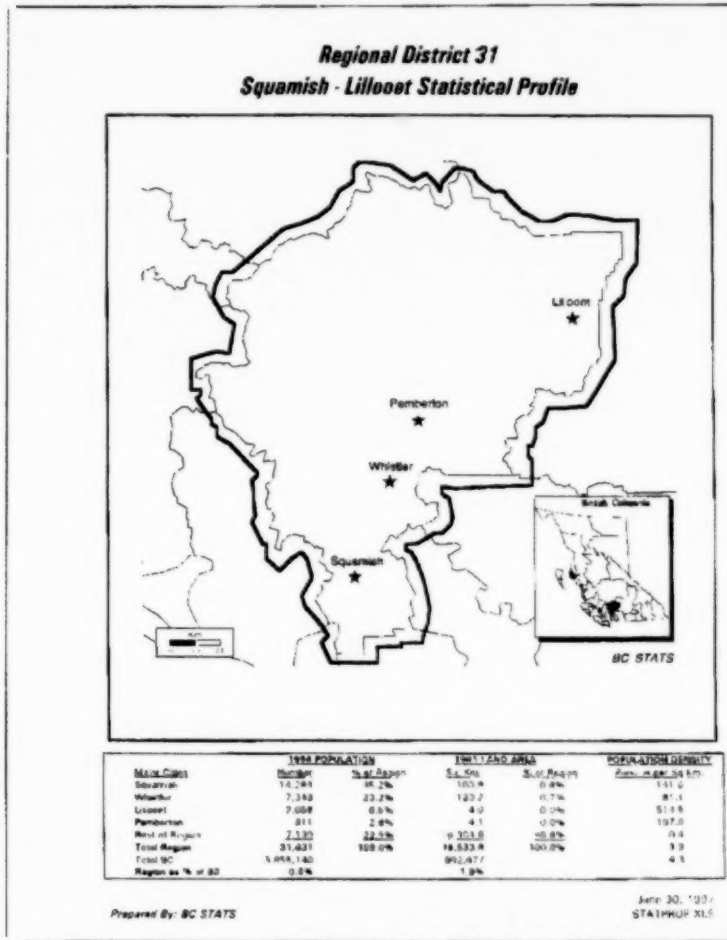
Infoline Announcemnet:

Released August, 1997
200 pages, $150 plus GST

Socio-Economic Statistical Profiles of BC Regions

This annual publication of BC STATS is an invaluable source of comparable demographic and social indicators across BC's regions. Includes: BC Profile by Development Region (8 pages); DR Profiles (8 @ 4 pages each); Regional District Profiles (30 @ 4 pages each); background tables (29 tables).

A half-size sample of the profile for Squamish-Lillooet Regional District appears below.

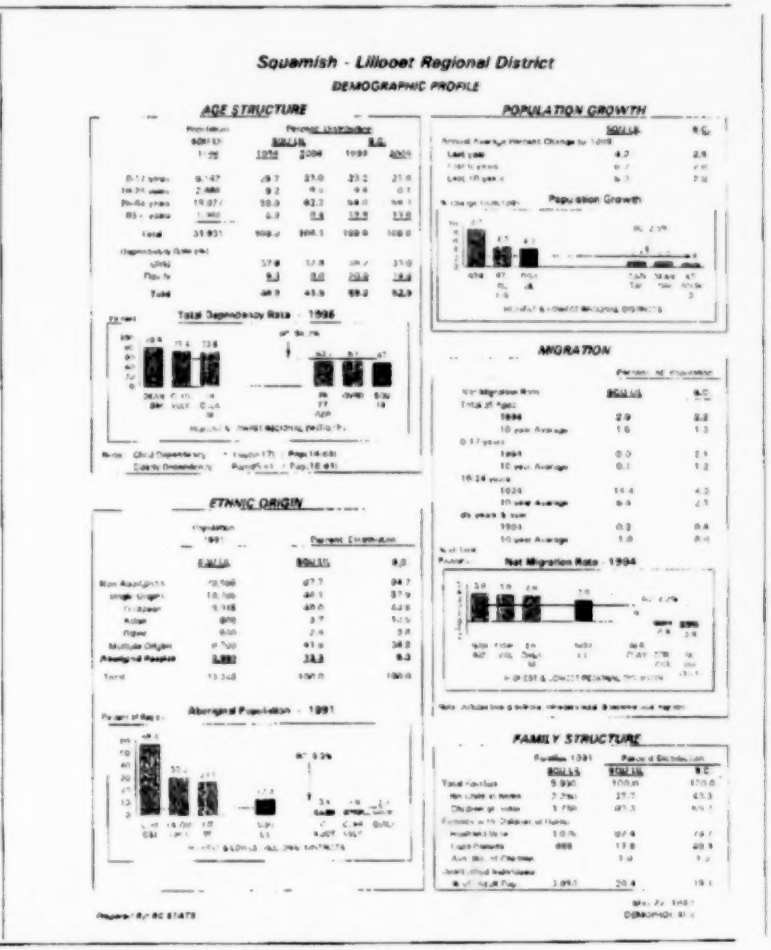


Regional District 31
Squamish - Lillooet Statistical Profile

Major Cities	1994 POPULATION Number	% of Region	AREA AND AREA Sq. Km.	% of Region	POPULATION DENSITY
Squamish	14,291	45.2%	103.9	0.6%	137.5
Whistler	7,348	23.2%	143.2	0.7%	51.3
Lillooet	2,668	8.5%	4.0	0.0%	667.0
Pemberton	811	2.6%	4.1	0.0%	197.8
Rest of Region	7,130	22.5%	9,303.8	46.8%	0.8
Total Region	31,431	100.0%	19,533.8	100.0%	1.6
Total BC	3,998,140		992,477		4.0
Region as % of BC	0.8%		1.9%		

Prepared By: BC STATS

June 30, '97
STATPROF XLS



Squamish - Lillooet Regional District
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

AGE STRUCTURE

POPULATION GROWTH

Total Dependency Rate - 1996

MIGRATION

Net Migration Rate - 1994

ETHNIC ORIGIN

Aboriginal Population - 1991

FAMILY STRUCTURE

Prepared By: BC STATS

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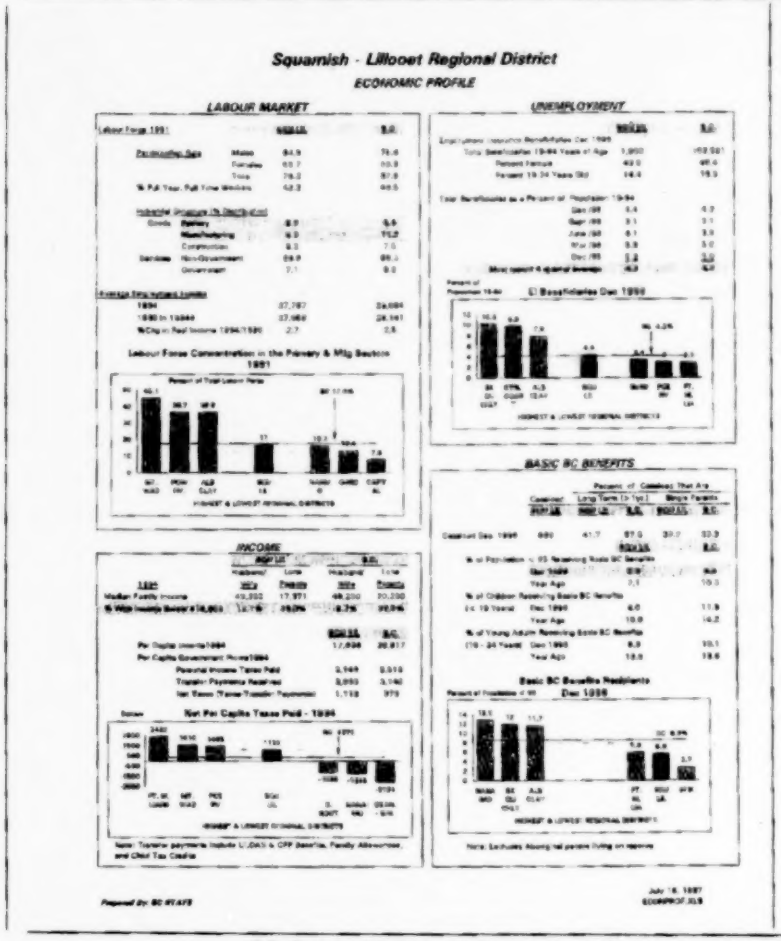


Squamish - Lillooet Regional District

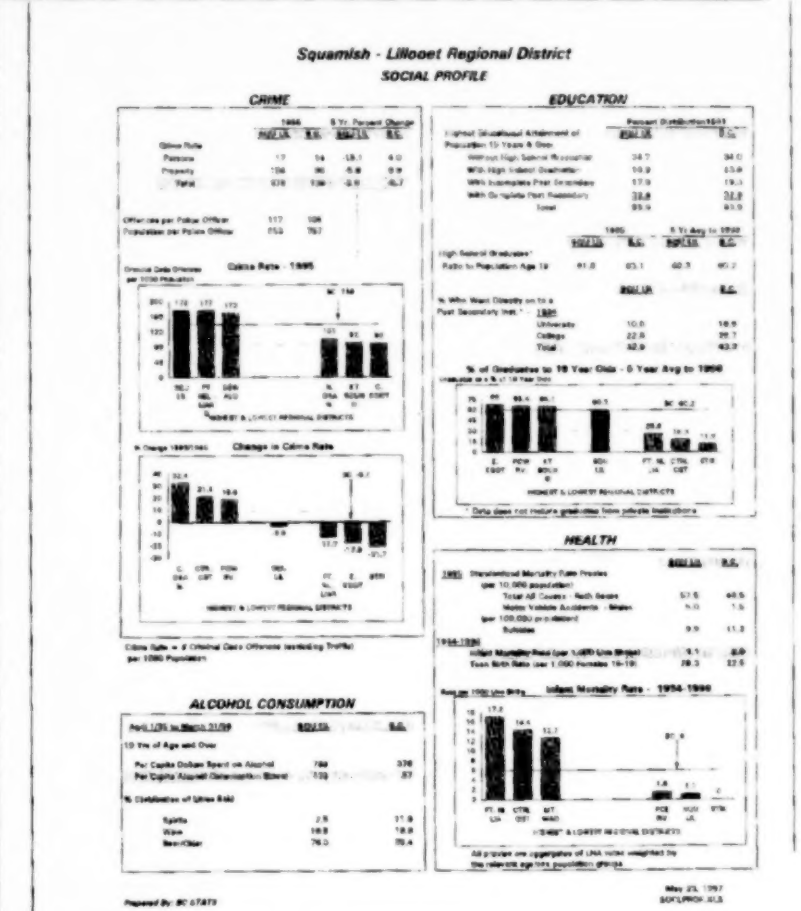
ECONOMIC PROFILE

LABOUR MARKET

UNEMPLOYMENT

INCOME

BASIC BC BENEFITS



Squamish - Lillooet Regional District

SOCIAL PROFILE

CRIME

EDUCATION

HEALTH

ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

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Infoline

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fax transmission information service from **BC STATS**

also on the Internet at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca

BC at a glance . . .

POPULATION (thousands)	Apr 1/97	% change on year ago
BC	3,915.9	2.2
Canada	30,202.9	1.1
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT		% change
(BC - at market prices - $ millions)	1996	on year ago
Current Dollars	103,631	1.7
Constant (1986) Dollars	74,001	1.0
TRADE ($ millions)		
Manufacturing Shipments (seas. adj.) Jun	2,811	4.5
Merchandise Exports (raw) Jun	2,172	6.1
Retail Sales (seasonally adjusted) Jun	2,643	1.3
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX		% change
(all items - 1986=100)	Jul '97	on year ago
BC	139.7	0.9
Canada	138.0	1.8
LABOUR FORCE (thousands)		% change
(seasonally adjusted)	Jul '97	on year ago
Labour Force - BC	2,027	2.2
Employed - BC	1,853	1.8
Unemployed - BC	174	6.7
		Jul '96
Unemployment Rate - BC *(percent)*	8.6	8.2
Unemployment Rate - Canada *(percent)*	9.0	9.9
INTEREST RATES (percent)	Aug 20/97	Aug 21/96
Prime Business Rate	4.75	6.00
Conventional Mortgages - 1 year	5.65	6.13
- 5 year	7.00	7.95
US/CANADA EXCHANGE RATE	Aug 20/97	Aug 21/96
(avg. noon spot rate) Cdn $	1.3938	1.3740
US $ *(reciprocal of above rate)*	0.7175	0.7278
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS		% change
(industrial aggregate - dollars)	May '97	on year ago
BC	617.63	3.0
Canada	602.63	3.2

SOURCES:
Gross Domestic Product: Statistics Canada, revised by BC STATS
Population, Trade, Prices, Labour Force, Earnings: Statistics Canada
Interest Rates, Exchange Rates: Bank of Canada Weekly Financial Statistics

1997 Manufacturers' Directory

BC STATS has just released the *1997 BC Manufacturers' Directory*. This publication is available only through BC STATS in Victoria. We are able to accept VISA and MasterCard orders over the phone or by fax and ship your book or disks by Canada Post the same day. If you require faster turn-around you may arrange for courier pick-up. To help with your order, a form is provided after **highlights**.

Many clients ask how accurate the book is. Every year we confirm each listing by contacting each and every firm.

Socio-Economic Statistical Profiles of BC Regions

This latest version provides the most current possible take on a variety of indicators. Each region is covered in a 4-page section. A sample, electronically reduced to half size in the interest of economy, is provided on the preceeding pages. To order, please call or fax Kris Ovens at:

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Released this week by BC STATS

- Consumer Price Index, July 1997
- Earnings and Employment Trends, May 1997
- Exports, May 1997

Next week

- Small Business Quarterly, 2nd Quarter 1997
- Business Indicators, August 1997
- Current Statistics, August 1997

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